



*United States Attorney
Southern District of New York*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
MARCH 12, 2003

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**U.S. INDICTS RAMAPO POLICE OFFICER FOR EXTORTION, ILLEGAL
DISTRIBUTION OF CABLE TV DECODERS AND LYING TO THE FBI**

JAMES B. COMEY, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, and KEVIN P. DONOVAN, the Assistant Director in Charge of the New York Office of the FBI, announced the unsealing today in Manhattan federal court of a seven-count Indictment charging GEORGE DRIVAS, a police officer with the Ramapo Police Department in Rockland County, with, among other crimes, conspiring to extort, and extorting, the owner of a business located in Ramapo, New York.

The Indictment also charges DRIVAS with conspiring to assist, and assisting, in the unauthorized decryption of satellite cable programming. The Indictment specifically alleges that DRIVAS agreed to assist two co-conspirators not named as defendants to buy and sell illegal cable television decoders, which permitted the ultimate recipients of the decoders to receive free cable television service.

Finally, the Indictment charges DRIVAS with making a number of false statements to federal law enforcement officers.

Specifically, the Indictment alleges that DRIVAS, when interviewed by special agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, falsely denied: (1) having ever used his relationship with a particular individual (the "Individual") to extort the owner of a business located in Ramapo, New York; (2) having ever assisted anyone to obtain devices used in the unauthorized decryption of satellite cable programming, including illegal cable television decoders; and (3) having ever used his position as a police officer with the Ramapo Police Department to perform any favors for the Individual, and specifically having ever run a check on a particular license plate for the Individual. The extortion and the illegal distribution of the cable television decoders are the subjects of the other criminal charges in the Indictment.

DRIVAS is scheduled to be arraigned on the charges in the Indictment before United States Magistrate Judge ANDREW J. PECK in Manhattan later today.

Mr. COMEY praised the investigative efforts of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and also thanked the Rockland County District Attorney's Office and Ramapo Police Department for their valuable assistance during the course of the investigation.

DRIVAS currently is suspended without pay from the Ramapo Police Department.

Assistant United States Attorneys LESLIE C. BROWN and

PREET S. BHARARA are in charge of the prosecution.

The charges contained in the Indictment are merely accusations, and the defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

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